

# Channels State Forest

## Forest History

The Virginia Department of Forestry purchased what is now the Channels State Forest from The Nature Conservancy (TNC) in early 2008. The purchase was made possible through funding from the Virginia Land Conservation Fund. TNC had purchased the property a few years earlier for the purpose of protecting and conserving this unique and valuable resource. Within the boundary of the 4,836-acre property is a 720-acre parcel that has been dedicated in perpetuity as the Channels Natural Area Preserve under the provisions of the Natural Area Preserve Act of 1989 to be managed by the Department of Forestry in partnership with the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

At the crest of the mountain, within the Natural Area Preserve, are the Great Channels of Virginia, impressive formations of 400-million-year-old sandstone outcroppings. Geologists conclude that the Channels were likely formed while the high-elevation sandstone cap was under the influence of permafrost and ice wedging during the last ice age. These forces shattered and enlarged joints in the sandstone caprock.

Located on the southern slope of Clinch Mountain, elevations on the Channels State Forest range from 1,800 feet to more than 4,200 feet. Ecological communities and forest types change significantly with elevation. A diversity of forest types from cove hardwoods to northern hardwoods are present. Continuing studies indicate the presence of rare and imperiled plant species.

## Forest Management

Like all of Virginia's state forests, the Channels is managed for multiple uses. One management goal is sustainable timber production. Management activities on the Channels State Forest demonstrate sound forestry and conservation practices. Wildlife habitat, recreation and watershed protection are all compatible with sound timber management strategies.

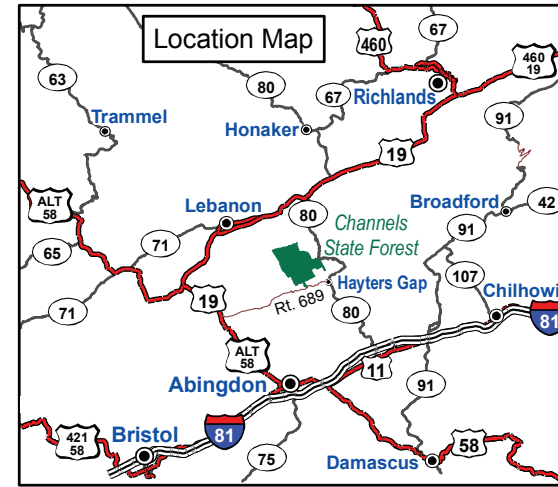
In the past, through several ownerships, the forest was subject to unregulated logging resulting in the diminished quality and productivity of the land. The Channels State Forest will be managed to continually restore and improve the forest, encourage natural biodiversity, protect water quality, provide wildlife habitat and provide recreational opportunities.

## About Your State Forests

The Virginia Department of Forestry (VDof) manages 19 State Forests and other state lands, totaling 57,685 acres. Virginia's State Forests are managed for multiple uses: water quality, recreation, forest products, wildlife and scenic beauty. The primary management goals of individual State Forests may vary, usually depending on the wishes of the donor of the land.

The State Forests of Virginia are self-supporting and receive no taxpayer funds for operation. Operating funds are generated from the sale of forest products. In addition, up to 25 percent of the revenue received from the sale of forest products is returned to the counties in which the forests are located. You can support educational programs on your State Forests by donating a portion of your state tax refund to Virginia's State Forests Fund.

## LOCATION



## MORE INFORMATION

To learn more about what your state forests have to offer and to get directions to any state forest, visit [www.dof.virginia.gov](http://www.dof.virginia.gov).

## CONTACT INFORMATION

### State Forest Main Office:

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### Virginia Department of Forestry

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# CHANNELS STATE FOREST

*~ 4,836 Acres ~  
Washington and Russell  
Counties*



Virginia Department of Forestry  
[www.dof.virginia.gov](http://www.dof.virginia.gov)



## Forest Recreation

The Channels State Forest is open from dawn to dusk and offers opportunities for hiking, wildlife watching, biking, horseback riding, hunting and picnicking. Hunters must have a State Forest Use Permit as well as all other required licenses. Horseback riding is restricted to existing roads and trails. NO horses are allowed on the Channels Summit Spur Trail as this trail is foot-travel only.

At the top of the mountain, hikers can enjoy long-range mountain views in all directions and explore the Great Channels. The fire tower located on the top of the mountain is now retired and out of service but is an important part of the history of the area.

Visitors are asked to adopt a "leave no trace" ethic when visiting the forest, as there are no restrooms or trash receptacles on the forest.

A State Forest Use Permit is required for hunting, trapping, fishing, bike riding and horse riding on Virginia State Forests. Permits are required for individuals age 16 and older, and can be purchased online for \$15.00 at <http://secure01.virginiainteractive.org/horf/> or where hunting licenses are sold.

### Channels State Forest Features:

Trails: 5.5 miles

Vehicle Roads: 0 miles

Gated Vehicle Trails: 38.8 miles

Ponds/Lakes: 0

Hunting: Yes

Fishing: No

Picnic Shelter: 0

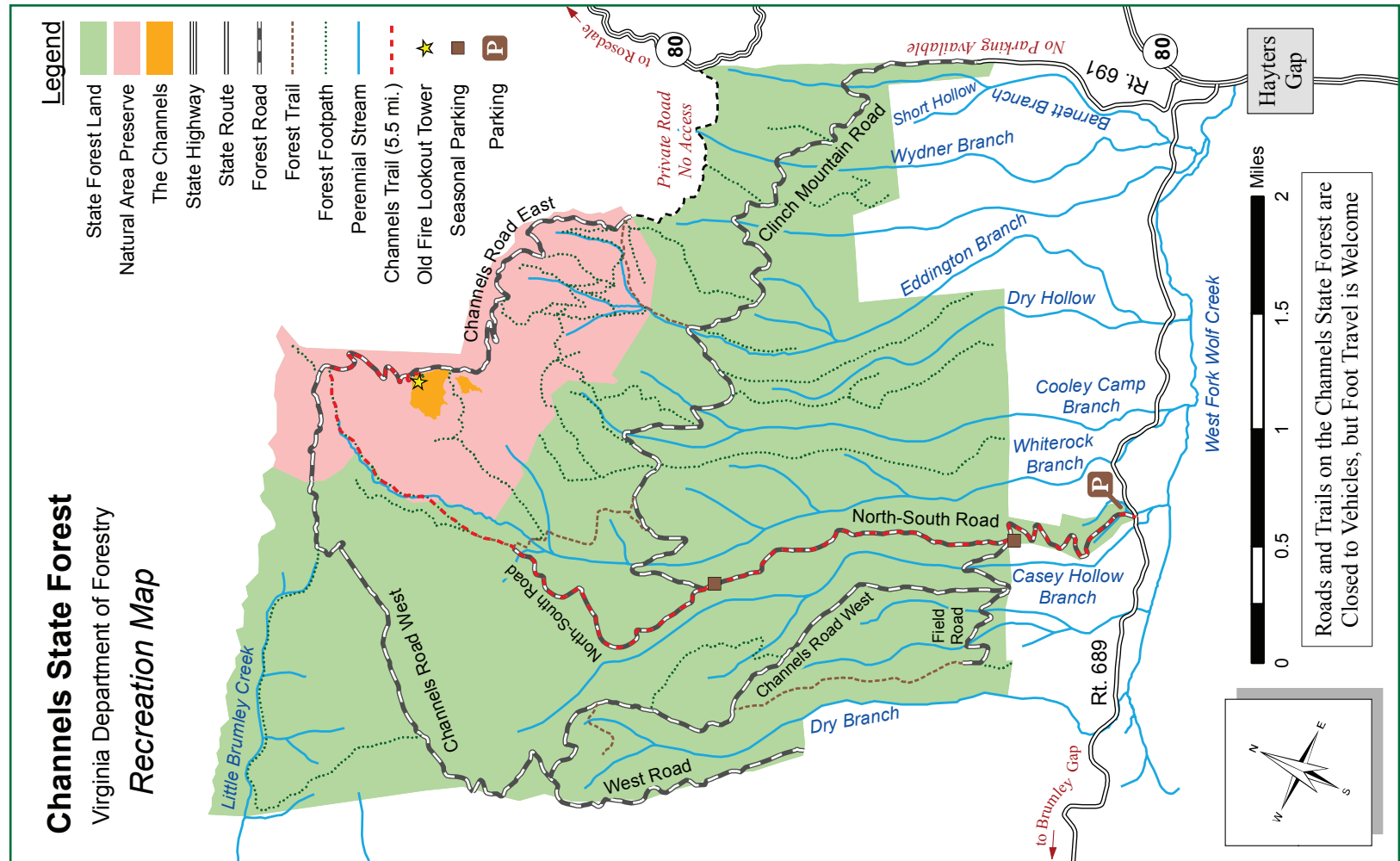
Restrooms: No

## State Forest Regulations

- Hunting and trapping with State Forest Use Permit in accordance with state hunting regulations.
- Biking and horse riding in designated areas only with State Forest Use Permit.
- State Forest Use Permits required only for anyone age 16 and older.
- No removal of any tree, plant or mineral.
- Remove all trash.
- No camping, ATVs or public display of alcohol.
- No fireworks, campfires or open air fires of any type.
- Firearms are prohibited except for hunting purposes.
- Vehicular traffic on established roads only; not permitted on gated roads.

For a complete listing of State Forest Regulations, go to [www.dof.virginia.gov](http://www.dof.virginia.gov).

Hunters map available at [www.dof.virginia.gov](http://www.dof.virginia.gov).



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